

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 GUATEM 03882 032258Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15  
ICA-11 SSO-00 INRE-00 MCT-01 HA-05 SY-05 EUR-12  
/104 W  
-----014292 040645Z /16

R 032223Z JUL 78  
FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0817  
INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR  
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE  
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA  
USCINCSO

CONFIDENTIAL GUATEMALA 3882

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, ASEC, GT  
SUBJECT: PRIEST ASSASSINATED

1. FATHER HERMOGENES LOPEZ, PARISH PRIEST OF SAN JOSE  
PINULA, RURAL COMMUNITY SEVERAL MINUTES DRIVE FROM  
CAPITAL, WAS AMBUSHED AND SHOT JUNE 30 WHILE DRIVING ALONE.

2. GENERAL ASSUMPTION IS THAT PRIEST'S MURDER WAS POLITICAL.  
FATHER HERMOGENES, A GUATEMALAN NATIONAL, HAD BEEN  
EXTREMELY ACTIVE IN SOCIAL ISSUES, HAVING LED PROTESTS  
AGAINST SCHEME BY LOCAL BUSINESS GROUP TO DIVERT WATER  
FROM HIS PARISH TO METROPOLITAN CONSUMERS; AGAINST LOCAL  
DAIRYMEN'S ATTEMPTS TO RAISE MILK PRICES; AND AGAINST  
ARMY CONSCRIPTION PRACTICES. ONLY SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE  
DEATH, FATHER HERMOGENES IN PAID NEWSPAPER AD ASKED  
THEN-PRESIDENT LAUGERUD TO ABOLISH THE ARMY. HE WILL  
ALSO BE REMEMBERED AS THE PRIEST WHO BROADCAST ACCUSA-  
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TION THAT PL 430 FOODSTUFFS ARE DOCTORED TO CAUSE  
STERILITY.

3. COMMENT. DEATH HAS EVOKED WIDE PUBLIC OUTCRY  
SECOND ONLY TO PANZOS EPISODE WITH WHICH  
IT IS SURE TO BE LINKED IN THE FUTURE. BARRING  
UNSOLVED PLANE CRASH DEATH OF MARYKNOLL FATHER WOODS

IN 1976, THIS IS FIRST ASSASSINATION ANYONE CAN RECALL  
OF A PRIEST IN GUATEMALA. LEFTIST GROUPS, INCLUDING  
THE CHURCH-RELATED PRO-JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMITTEE, ARE  
ALREADY LINKING THE EVENT TO ILL-CONSIDERED POST-PANZOS  
STATEMENTS OF DEFENSE AND GOVERNMENT MINISTERS BLAMING  
CHURCHMEN FOR SOCIAL AGITATION. FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, WE  
FIND IT DIFFICULT TO CONCEIVE THAT GOG, HOWEVER  
MALIGNANT ITS MOTIVES, WOULD CHOOSE PRESIDENTIAL  
INAUGURATION PERIOD FOR SUCH A POTENTIALLY INCENDIARY  
ACTION.  
BOSTER

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** MURDER, CLERGYMEN  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 03 jul 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978GUATEM03882  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780275-0148  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** GUATEMALA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Line Count:** 73  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
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**Message ID:** 6c42c06a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION ARA  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 13 may 2005  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 1847753  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** PRIEST ASSASSINATED  
**TAGS:** PINS, ASEC, GT, (LOPEZ, HERMOGENES)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/6c42c06a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
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